

FREE DIGITAL
SAMPLE FOR
the week of
March 26, 2017

DAILY
UNIVERSAL
PRAYER
AND COMMENTARY

CELEBRATING

50

YEARS IN PRINT



FREE DIGITAL WEEK OF *DAILY UNIVERSAL PRAYER* FROM FAITH CATHOLIC



SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 2017

**FOURTH SUNDAY
OF LENT**

(Lec. 31)

- 1) 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a
- 2) Ephesians 5:8-14
- 3) John 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

FOCUS: The blind man's conversion of heart stands in stark contrast to the stubborn blindness of the Pharisees.

Observing how a blind person negotiates his or her way through life is inspiring. Observing blindness of heart, however, is troubling. Those who are blind to the truth often stumble through life because of obstacles they place in their own paths. When we seek the truth of the Gospel, we are like the blind man who came to believe in the Son of Man.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

At first, Samuel judges by appearances, then he is reminded by God to judge the heart in order to find a worthy candidate to anoint as king. Saint Paul challenges us to live as children of light. In the Gospel, we have a man, blind from birth, move from seeing Jesus as a prophet to seeing Jesus as the Promised One, while the blindness of the Pharisees remains.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Seeking to eradicate our own spiritual blindness, let us petition our loving God to fill our hearts with his light.

- 1) For Pope Francis, our clergy and all pastoral leaders, may they help us to embrace the Light of Christ with all our hearts, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of nations, may they shed any blindness to seeking power that impedes them from serving the needs of all the people entrusted to their care, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who struggle with disabilities, may they receive whatever assistance they need to fully share their gifts and talents with others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the Elect and candidates preparing to receive the Easter sacraments, may the anticipated joy of being one with Christ strengthen their resolve to be children of the Light, let us pray to the Lord
- 5) For those who have died and faithfully carried their crosses through life, may they share in the victory won by Jesus in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: O God of Abraham and Father of Jesus, hear our prayer as we seek your wisdom and guidance. Grant us greater clarity of spiritual sight and draw us ever closer to you. We pray through Christ our Lord.



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FREE DIGITAL WEEK OF *DAILY UNIVERSAL PRAYER* FROM FAITH CATHOLIC



Monday, March 27, 2017

MONDAY OF

(Lec. 244)

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

- 1) Isaiah 65:17-21
- 2) John 4:43-54

FOCUS: We rejoice in God's promise of everlasting life as we travel deeper into our journey of Lent.

Lent is a time to change our hearts and minds, and put our trust in the Lord. This is difficult. God has promised us life, and he will deliver on that promise. All we are asked to do is to come close to him, listen to his word and trust that he will take care of us.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Isaiah proclaims that the Lord will make all things new and not recall past mistakes, if only his people would return to the Lord. In John's Gospel, many come to believe in Jesus because of what he has done for them. The official asks for his son to be healed, and believes without first seeing.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us place our trust in our merciful Father and bring him our prayers.

- 1) That the Church may continue to preach the Good News to those who are lost, offering them a place of acceptance and love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That those around the world who are persecuted for their Christian faith may be able to celebrate Holy Week in safety and without fear of reprisal, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who live with addiction may derive strength from their faith in God, and be blessed with the help needed to begin the journey to healing and recovery, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That members of this faith community may take advantage of the sacrament of reconciliation during this Lenten season, and use it as an opportunity to develop a closer relationship with God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That the faithful departed might rejoice with all the angels and saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: O God, hear and answer our prayers that we offer you through Christ our Lord.



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Tuesday, March 28, 2017

TUESDAY OF

(Lec. 245)

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

- 1) Ezekiel 47: 1-9, 12
- 2) John 5:1-16

FOCUS: Jesus offers new life, healing and salvation.

What does it mean to be “well?” Simply the absence of disease or physical affliction? Jesus heals not only the body, but the soul. He forgives sins, and warns those who are healed to avoid sin. Certainly, it is important to care for our bodies. But it is equally important that we care for our souls, so we might stay on the right track and be well for eternity.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of Ezekiel’s vision of water flowing out from the Temple, bringing life in whatever direction it flowed. In the Gospel, Jesus cures a crippled man and commands him to take up his mat and walk. The Jewish leaders begin to persecute Jesus because he healed the man on the Sabbath.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing that God is present among us, let us bring our petitions to him, full of hope and gratitude.

- 1) That the Church may be blessed with an abundance of holy men and women who hear and answer the call to priesthood and consecrated life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That elected officials will work to defend the dignity and sanctity of human life from conception through natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That the elderly may find peace in the love of God, and through the kindness of their neighbors and the compassion of caregivers, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the families in our community may grow strong in their love for God and one another by placing God at the center of their lives and praying daily, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may come to dwell in the new and heavenly Jerusalem, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, look down upon your children who come to you in their need, and grant their petitions in the name of your son, Jesus Christ.



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Wednesday, March 29, 2017

WEDNESDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

(Lec. 246)

- 1) Isaiah 49:8-15
- 2) John 5:17-30

FOCUS: God's love for us is unmatched by any earthly love we can imagine.

God's love for us cannot be matched, even by the most loving image we can contemplate: the love of a mother for her child. How wonderful it is to know that the creator of the universe, the Almighty One, loves us individually and unconditionally, and will never stop loving us. Let us be ever-grateful.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Isaiah likens the love of God to the love a mother has for her child, but goes on to say if a mother should forget her child, God will never forget or abandon his people. In the Gospel, Jesus calls God his Father, and we honor God by honoring his Son. He said the Father has given his Son the power to judge justly.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: United to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, let us join in offering our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) That the Holy Father, and all clergy and religious, will continue to seek the lost and guide them to the light of God's love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That all parents may be strengthened and assisted in their special role of raising good, loving children who heed the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That children suffering because of economic conditions and poverty may obtain the help and security they need through a caring community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the people of this parish may always welcome the stranger, and work to spread the Good News at work, at school and at home, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That our beloved dead may experience everlasting joy in the company of the angels and saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for all you do for us. We bring these petitions to you, trusting in your loving providence, through your son, Jesus Christ.



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Thursday, March 30, 2017

THURSDAY OF

(Lec. 247)

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

- 1) Exodus 32:7-14
- 2) John 5:31-47

FOCUS: Turn away from sin and reconcile with God. Let him pour his gift of mercy and hope upon us.

We may be tempted to judge the Israelites, who quickly turned to their former ways and forgot about God. We must be careful, though, because in many ways, we also do this. The key is to always turn back to God and reconcile with him. The sacrament of reconciliation offers us his gift of mercy and grace so we may resist sin and continue to grow in holiness.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading recalls Moses' earnest plea to the Lord to have mercy on the Israelites. Moses' appeal brings God to relent of the punishment he had planned to bring upon them for worshipping a molten calf. In the Gospel, Jesus testifies to his relationship with the Father and his saving works.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing our need for reconciliation, let us turn to God who pours out his love and mercy upon us.

- 1) For missionaries in the Church, may they be given the grace to continue their work of spreading the Gospel message to those who have yet to hear and believe, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may they work to end ethnic and religious tensions in their countries that can lead to violence and unrest, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are suffering this Lent due to the loss of employment, may the light of Christ become visible to them, and may they find employment to sustain them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For an awakening in our parish community to the needs of the poor, may our hearts respond in love to reach out to them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they find rest in the arms of our heavenly Father in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, we ask that you hear and answer the prayers we offer today in the name of your son, Jesus Christ.



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FREE DIGITAL WEEK OF *DAILY UNIVERSAL PRAYER* FROM FAITH CATHOLIC



Friday, March 31, 2017

FRIDAY OF

(Lec. 248)

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

- 1) Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22
- 2) John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

FOCUS: We are called to be courageous, and trust in God's unwavering love and care.

In times of distress, it is difficult to be patient in our desire that God hear and answer our prayer. It is at those times that we must lean even more on our faith, and trust in the God who made us and has a plan for our lives that no one can thwart. He will "rescue us" and renew our faith in his loving care and mercy.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the wicked conspire to put to death the just one who walks in the way of the Lord. The responsorial psalm reminds us that God is close to the broken-hearted. Today's Gospel tells of Jesus not wanting to travel to Judea because some of the Jewish leaders there were trying to kill him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in God's timely and gracious providence, we place our needs before him.

- 1) That during these remaining days of Lent, the Church may continue to preach the message of Jesus, and his love, care and mercy for people throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That elected officials will always serve with humility, putting the needs of those they serve ahead of their own self-interests, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who have been forced from their homeland because of war or violence may find safe refuge and welcome from people of goodwill, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we in this parish community will open our hearts more fully to the Holy Spirit so that our love for God will shine forth and we may be more generous in assisting those who are in need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That the faithful departed may live in the light of God's love for all eternity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear our prayers and bless us with the grace to live with faith at all times, trusting that you know our needs best. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.



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Saturday, April 1, 2017

SATURDAY OF

(Lec. 249)

FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

1) Jeremiah 11:18-20

2) John 7:40-53

FOCUS: Jesus was a gift from our heavenly Father.

Just because something is unlikely does not mean it is impossible. Many people doubted Jesus because of his lowly beginnings. He came from nowhere and no one – at least that is what they thought. Ignoring or underestimating someone because they do not seem worthy of special notice can result in missing out on a true gift.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

We hear in today's first reading that God protected the prophet Jeremiah from those who would stop him from speaking the Lord's message. In the Gospel, there is also a plot to stop God's work. The Pharisees unsuccessfully try to sabotage Jesus, even as Nicodemus, one of their own, speaks up for Jesus.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us bring our needs to the Father, trusting in his goodness and love.

- 1) That our Church leaders, through their teaching and example, may continue to help us grow in our efforts to follow Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That government leaders throughout the world may find ways to bridge differences between and among their people so that violence and hatred lose their grip, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who suffer persecution because of their religious beliefs may be kept safe and be assured of God's love for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we in this parish community may always welcome the stranger, and be the face of Jesus to all whom we meet when we walk out these doors, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may experience everlasting joy in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Holy God, we bring our prayers to you, confident in your providence and seeking your special blessings. We pray through Christ our Lord.



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FREE DIGITAL WEEK OF *DAILY UNIVERSAL PRAYER* FROM FAITH CATHOLIC



SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2017

**SUNDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK OF LENT**

(Lec. 34)

- 1) Ezekiel 37:12-14
- 2) Romans 8:8-11
- 3) John 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

FOCUS: Jesus promises that those who believe and follow him will never die.

Today's Gospel recounts Jesus saying, I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live. These words clearly identify Jesus as the Son of God, the author of life and the one who brings our salvation. The words also give the promise and hope of eternal life in heaven to all who believe in him and persevere in faith.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Ezekiel, the prophet tells the Israelites that they will know God because he gives them life and frees them from enslavement. Saint Paul explains to the Romans that the life-giving spirit they received through Christ frees them from both sin and death. In the Gospel reading, Jesus proclaims that he is the resurrection and the life and that all who live and believe in him will never die.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, we bring our petitions to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we will continually strive to open ourselves more fully to the Holy Spirit each day so we may continue to grow in faith, and have the grace and gifts needed to give a more faithful witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders, may they seek guidance from God in making decisions that affect the quality of life for all they serve, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who feel alienated or discouraged, may they find the welcome they long for within the community of the Catholic Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of this parish, may our hearts be open and responsive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and all who have died, may they come to know the fullness of life and love in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God our Father, we thank you for the gift of the Spirit who gives us life. Hear these prayers, and those held within the silence of our hearts, according to your will. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.



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